GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:241
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2008
SHARE OF PUBLIC SECTOR TELECOM COMPANIES
Singh Shri Rakesh

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any concrete steps during the last year and in 2007-08 to improve the share of Public Sector Companies in providing Basic and Mobile Telephone Services in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the house.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 241 FOR 17TH MARCH, 2008 REGARDING SHARE OF PUBLIC SECTOR TELECOM COMPANIES.

(a) to (c) The total number of telephone connections of Public Sector Companies have increased from 61.07 million as on 31/03/2006 to 76.46 million as on 31/01/2008. However, their market share has declined steadily during the last few years because of increased competition in the market. The following concrete steps have been taken to improve the market share of Public Sector Companies:

i) Expansion of Cellular Mobile Network and Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) network to overcome the network congestion and take care of ever growing demand.

ii) Deployment of mobile network along all the Highways to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

iii) In order to give more attention to telecom services in rural areas, Government has undertaken the following Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) schemes:-

- Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 uncovered villages.
- Setting up of 7,871 sharable infrastructure sites in phase-I and plan for 11,049 sites in phase-II.
- Subsidy support for Rural Direct Exchange lines (RDELs).

iv) Expansion of Broadband network in all the major cities and induction of broadband in about 1000 rural blocks.

v) BSNL and MTNL are being permitted usage of dual technology spectrum.

vi) Providing number of Value Added Services for both mobile and landline subscribers such as news, songs, astrology, e-ticketing, Short Massage Service (SMS), voice SMS, internet, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) etc. in line with emerging trends.

vii) BSNL/MTNL are regularly reviewing their tariff and introducing new plans for various products and services so as to make them competitive and customer oriented.